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REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON COLLEGE- ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS IN LATIN

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At its annual meeting in 1908 the American Philological Association, acting upon petitions from the Classical Association of New England, the Classical Association of the Atlantic States, and the Classical Association of the Middle West and South, passed this vote:

Resolved, That there be constituted under the authority of this Association a commission of fifteen members on college-entrance requirements in Latin, to formulate definitions of such requirements and to further the adoption of these definitions by our colleges and universities, in the interest of that uniformity toward the attainment of which this Association in the vote of December 28, 1907, promised to "lend all aid in its power."

Resolved, That the members of this Association who are present as representatives of the Classical Associations of New England, the Atlantic States, and the Middle West and South be constituted a committee to select the commission named above; further, that this commission shall consist of four members each, two representing colleges and two representing secondary schools, from the Classical Associations of New England and the Atlantic States, and seven members from the Classical Association of the Middle West and South, four representing colleges and three representing secondary schools, and shall include the committee of selection.

The committee charged with the selection of the Commission, W. G. Hale, J. C. Kirtland, and Gonzalez Lodge, asked the Latin departments of certain universities to designate representatives and left to the three classical associations the choice of the members to represent secondary schools. The committee deemed it important that four universities which admit students only on examination, two within the territory of the Classical Association of New England and two within the territory of the Classical Association of the Atlantic States, should be represented on the commission, and thus made up the complement

of college representatives allowed to these associations by the vote establishing the commission; in the case of the Classical Association of the Middle West and South, institutions in different parts of its territory were selected. As finally constituted, the commission consists of the following members:

- Walter Dennison, University of Michigan (*Secretary*).
- W. G. Hale, University of Chicago.
- M. M. Hart, William McKinley High School, St. Louis.
- J. W. D. Ingersoll, Yale University.
- J. C. Kirtland, Phillips Exeter Academy (*Chairman*).
- Gonzalez Lodge, Teachers College, Columbia University.
- D. W. Lothman, East High School, Cleveland.
- B. W. Mitchell, Central High School, Philadelphia.
- C. H. Moore, Harvard University.
- F. P. Moulton, Hartford High School.
- J. J. Schlicher, State Normal School, Terre Haute.
- R. B. Steele, Vanderbilt University.
- D. R. Stuart, Princeton University.
- William Tappan, Jefferson School, Baltimore.
- A. T. Walker, University of Kansas.

As soon as all the members had been appointed, a chairman was elected. He submitted to the members interrogatories covering all the matters that had been proposed for the consideration of the commission and such others as are involved in the demand for uniform requirements and uniform examinations, and they sent their answers, with the arguments with which they supported their opinions, to their colleagues. This preliminary discussion prepared the way for the meeting of the commission, which was held in Cleveland on October 29 and 30, 1909. All members were present at every session, and the following definitions of college-entrance requirements in Latin were adopted by unanimous votes:

I. AMOUNT AND RANGE OF THE READING REQUIRED

1. The Latin reading required of candidates for admission to college, without regard to the prescription of particular authors and works, shall be not less *in amount* than Caesar, *Gallic War*, i-iv; Cicero, the orations against Catiline, for the Manilian Law, and for Archias; Vergil, *Aeneid*, i-vi.

2. The amount of reading specified above shall be selected by the schools from the following authors and works: Caesar (*Gallic War* and *Civil War*) and Nepos (*Lives*); Cicero (orations, letters, and *De Senectute*) and Sallust (*Catiline* and *Jugurthine War*); Vergil (*Bucolics*, *Georgics*, and *Aeneid*) and Ovid (*Metamorphoses*, *Fasti*, and *Tristia*).

II. SUBJECTS AND SCOPE OF THE EXAMINATIONS

1. *Translation at Sight.* Candidates will be examined in translation at sight of both prose and verse. The vocabulary, constructions, and range of ideas of the passages set will be suited to the preparation secured by the reading indicated above.

2. *Prescribed Reading.* Candidates will be examined also upon the following prescribed reading: Cicero, orations for the Manilian Law and for Archias, and Vergil, *Aeneid*, I, II, and either IV or VI at the option of the candidate, with questions on subject-matters, literary and historical allusions, and prosody. Every paper in which passages from the prescribed reading are set for translation will contain also one or more passages for translation at sight; and candidates must deal satisfactorily with both these parts of the paper, or they will not be given credit for either part.

3. *Grammar and Composition.* The examinations in grammar and composition will demand thorough knowledge of all regular inflections, all common irregular forms, and the ordinary syntax and vocabulary of the prose authors read in school, with ability to use this knowledge in writing simple Latin prose. The words, constructions, and range of ideas called for in the examinations in composition will be such as are common in the reading of the year, or years, covered by the particular examination.

NOTE.—The examinations in grammar and composition may be either in separate papers or combined with other parts of the Latin examination, at the option of each individual institution; and nothing in any of the above definitions on the grammar, prosody, or subject-matter of any of the passages set for translation, if it so desires.

SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING PREPARATION

Exercises in translation at sight should begin in school with the first lessons in which Latin sentences of any length occur, and should continue throughout the course with sufficient frequency to insure correct methods of work on the part of the student. From the outset particular attention should be given to developing the ability to take in the meaning of each word—and so, gradually, of the whole sentence—just as it stands; the sentence should be read and understood in the order of the original, with full appreciation of the force of each word as it comes, so far as this can be known or inferred from that which has preceded and from the form and the position of the word itself. The habit of reading in this way

should be encouraged and cultivated as the best preparation for all the translating that the student has to do. No translation, however, should be a mechanical metaphrase. Nor should it be a mere loose paraphrase. The full meaning of the passage to be translated, gathered in the way described above, should finally be expressed in clear and natural English.

A written examination cannot test the ear or tongue, but proper instruction in any language will necessarily include the training of both. The school work in Latin, therefore, should include much reading aloud, writing from dictation, and translation from the teacher's reading. Learning suitable passages by heart is also very useful, and should be more practiced.

The work in composition should give the student a better understanding of the Latin he is reading at the time, if it is prose, and greater facility in reading. It is desirable, however, that there should be systematic and regular work in composition during the time in which poetry is read as well; for this work the prose authors already studied should be used as models.

Increased stress upon translation at sight in entrance examinations is not recommended solely upon the ground of the merits of this test of the training and the ability of the candidate for admission to college. Two other considerations had great weight with the commission: the desirability of leaving the schools free to choose, within reasonable limits, the Latin to be read by their students; and the possibility of encouraging students and teachers alike to look upon the school work as directed toward the mastery of the laws of language and the learning to read Latin, rather than the passing of examinations of known content, a superficial knowledge of which may be gained by means unprofitable in themselves and in their effect upon the student's habits even vicious. The commission is supported in this recommendation by resolutions passed by the American Philological Association, the Classical Association of New England, the Classical Association of the Atlantic States, and various smaller organizations of teachers. Moreover, the recommendation is in line with the practice of other countries and the present tendency in our own country.

The adoption by the colleges of the definitions of requirements formulated by the commission will not necessitate any change in the reading of the schools, and there is no reason

to believe that the usual course of four books of the *Gallic War*, six orations of Cicero, and six books of the *Aeneid* will be at once generally abandoned or greatly modified. The course of study is not so likely to change as the methods of study. The commission feels, however, that it is wise to open the way for a wider range of reading, and that the schools should have the right to select the material to be read, the colleges contenting themselves with evidence that the reading has been so done as to furnish the right sort of training and the necessary preparation for their work. A flexible course of reading has many advantages. A change may be made when an author or style becomes wearisome or has grown so familiar that the change makes for a maximum of accomplishment, and the student who must repeat a year's work will generally do better if he has new reading. Besides, all authors and works are not equally suitable for all schools; difference in age and grasp should be taken into account, and students usually read with most interest and profit that to which their teachers come with most enthusiasm. The teacher, too, should have some incentive to increase his own familiarity with the literature.

It will be noticed that the amount of reading has not been diminished from the requirements now in force. The colleges which admit students on certificates from the schools will have no difficulty in exacting this amount, and experience shows that the substitution of sight-examinations for examinations in prescribed work has a tendency to increase rather than reduce the amount of reading. It will be noticed, also, that the choice of reading has not been left entirely to the schools. In addition to the more definite prescription of works for examination, the requirements limit the reading in school to certain works not usually read in colleges. Only schools which read more than the required amount will be free to go beyond these bounds.

The commission has prescribed for examination portions of the reading intended for the last two years of the school course only, inasmuch as students usually take the entrance examinations at the ends of these years. It is expected that colleges

which require only two years of Latin for entrance, or accept so much as a complete preparatory course, will set examinations in translation at sight rather than prescribe any portion of the reading.

The commission was instructed by the American Philological Association not only to formulate definitions of the college-entrance requirements in Latin, but also to further the adoption of these definitions by the colleges and universities of the country, in the interest of uniformity. A vote passed by the Philological Association in 1907 indorsed the demand that the requirements of different institutions should be expressed in identical terms, and this vote was approved in the subsequent action of the classical associations. The commission therefore respectfully petitions the authorities of colleges and universities to adopt, without material alteration, the definitions of requirements formulated by it. When uniformity has once been established, it will be easy to correct these definitions or change the requirements themselves by concerted action, if they are found, after sufficient trial, to be unsatisfactory. The commission has not attempted to make full definition of the requirements or a complete plan of examination. Although it has confined its recommendations almost entirely to the requirements and examinations in reading, it believes it has made possible the removal of most of the vexations attending the present variety in the Latin requirements.

The Commission voted on December 28 to ask colleges adopting the definitions of requirements proposed by it to announce their action before the beginning of the next school year, and to hold the first examinations under the new plan in 1911.